B-5026

Texas Agricultural Extension Service

Status of Rural Texas

Texas Agricultural Extension Service
Zerle L. Carpenter, Director
The Texas A&M University System
College Station, Texas

[Blank Page in Original Bulletin]

Status of Rural Texas

Dennis U. Fisher
Extension Economist — Development and Policy

Understanding the differences between rural and urban Texas is critical to developing an effective rural development policy. Texas has been experiencing economic stress since the early 1980s when sharp declines in oil, gas and agricultural prices shocked the state. Oil and gas prices declined again in 1986 (Figure 1). These adversities affected the entire state, but rural residents found their economies more dependent on these volatile industries than urban economies. As a result, rural land values have declined and reduced the capacity of local governments to fund public services from property tax revenues. A crisis for financial institutions across the state resulted. A close examination of the following points confirms the necessity for special policy measures to aid rural Texas during a time of economic stress:

- Selective outmigration has taken a toll on rural Texas.
- Rural Texans are poorer.
- Rural Texas economies appear diversified, while large areas remain specialized.

Selective Outmigration

A continuing outmigration from many rural Texas counties has drawn more heavily from those who are better educated and of prime working age. This leaves a rural population that is older and less educated. The result is a scarcity of young, well-educated residents who can assume leadership roles with public and private organizations and businesses.

Rural residents tend to be older than urban residents. Thirty-one percent of residents in nonmetropolitan Texas were 50 years of age or older in 1990, compared to 20 percent of metropolitan residents (Figure 2).

The relative age differences are even more pronounced in selected regions of the state. In the Texas Agricultural Extension Service's (TAEX) West Central District, 40 percent of the nonmetropolitan residents were over 50 years of age, compared to 25 percent of metropolitan residents (Table 1 and Figure 3). Table 2 and Figure 4 provide the same information for State Planning Regions and Regional Council Membership. Mills and Hamilton, two adjacent rural counties in central Texas, have the oldest populations. Forty-seven

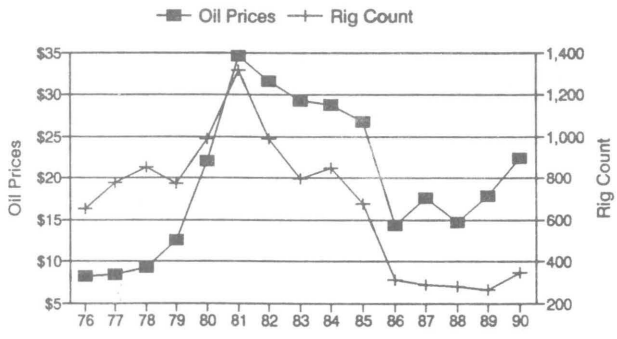

Figure 1. Texas oil prices and rig counts, 1976 – 1990.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service from Texas Railroad Commission data.

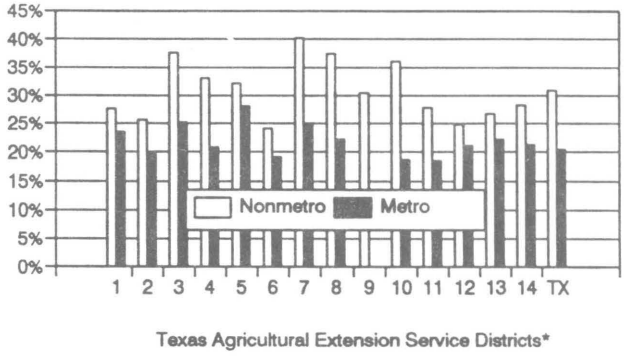

Figure 2. Population over 50 years of age in 1990.

*Texas Agricultural Extension Service Districts are identified in Figure 3.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census data.

Table 1. Comparisons of metro and nonmetro Texas by Texas Agricultural Extension Service districts.

TAEX District	Metro/ nonmet	Per capita income 1988	Unemployment rate 1990	Population change 1980–90	50 years or older 1990	12 years + education 1980
			Percent			
Texas	Nonmet	$12,627	6.3	6.7	30.8	50.5
	Metro	$15,060	6.1	22.8	20.3	66.0
1	Nonmet	$16,821	4.1	-7.3	27.4	60.4
	Metro	$14,627	5.1	8.0	23.3	69.4
2	Nonmet	$14,015	4.9	-7.9	25.5	49.7
	Metro	$13,431	4.8	5.2	19.4	66.0
3	Nonmet	$14,269	4.4	-10.1	37.6	48.8
	Metro	$14,930	6.1	1.1	25.1	65.0
4	Nonmet	$12,938	5.7	12.4	33.0	52.2
	Metro	$17,795	5.2	31.8	20.7	69.9
5	Nonmet	$12,839	6.7	10.6	32.1	54.4
	Metro	$14,073	6.2	13.5	27.8	61.7
6	Nonmet	$12,061	5.4	0.9	24.0	52.7
	Metro	$11,323	9.3	20.5	19.1	61.8
7	Nonmet	$14,073	5.1	3.3	40.1	49.4
	Metro	$14,117	5.9	11.4	24.9	62.2
8	Nonmet	$13,206	6.1	12.3	37.2	52.5
	Metro	$12,923	6.4	15.3	22.1	63.2
9	Nonmet	$11,933	5.8	11.3	30.3	51.1
10	Nonmet	$12,406	4.5	16.0	35.9	44.7
	Metro	$14,739	4.4	43.0	18.6	71.3
11	Nonmet	$14,417	5.5	1.2	27.8	49.4
	Metro	$15,954	5.5	17.3	18.4	68.3
12	Nonmet	$7,309	20.0	18.4	24.6	35.6
	Metro	$7,519	15.3	31.2	20.9	42.2
13	Nonmet	$10,525	9.8	13.3	26.7	47.9
	Metro	$13,442	7.0	20.7	22.0	62.9
14	Nonmet	$11,793	5.2	1.9	28.1	46.8
	Metro	$12,793	6.5	7.4	21.3	57.8

Data sources are listed on preceding graphs.

percent of their populations are over 50 years of age (Table 3). Although rural counties with younger populations do exist, particularly in the Rio Grande Valley, rural counties in every region of the state have older populations than metropolitan counties.

The population in nonmetropolitan Texas tends to be bi-modal with a relatively high proportion in the older and younger age categories and a lower proportion of the population in the prime working age category. This age distribution of the population is more pronounced for counties not adjacent to metropolitan areas.

Rural residents also tend to be less educated than urban residents. In 1980 only 50 percent of the residents of nonmetropolitan counties had completed high school compared to 66 percent for metropolitan residents (Figure 5). Only 10 percent had completed college compared to 19 percent of metropolitan residents. As a result, rural labor forces are not prepared for the demands of today's industries.

Educational attainment levels vary substantially across the state. In the Rio Grande Valley (TAEX South Texas District) almost 36 percent of the nonmetropolitan population had 12 years of education or more, but in the Panhandle this reached a high of 60 percent (Figures 3, 4, 6 and Tables 1, 2 and 3). In all regions of the state, nonmetropolitan counties lagged behind metropolitan counties in average educational level.

While proximity to a metropolitan area does not protect rural counties from experiencing selective outmigration, it does appear to reduce the severity of population loss. Forty percent of rural Texas counties not adjacent to a metropolitan area experienced net outmigration between 1980 and 1985, as compared to only 30 percent of rural counties that were adjacent to metropolitan areas (Figure 7). Only 60 percent of the

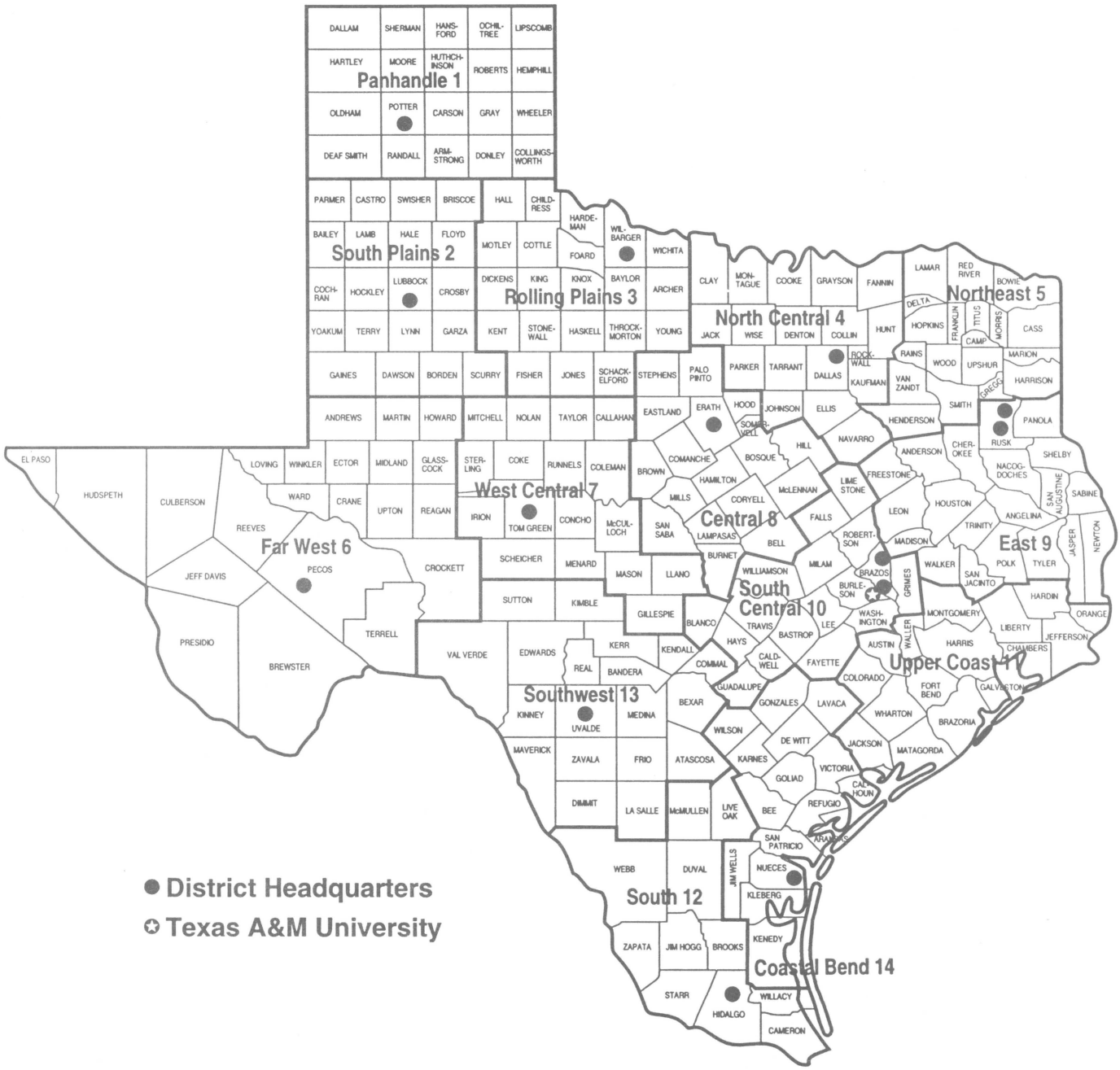

Figure 3. Texas Agricultural Extension Service Districts

Table 2. Comparisons of metro and nonmetro Texas by Council of Governments (COG) districts.

COG Dist	Metro/ nonmet	Per capita income 1988	Unemployment rate 1990	Population change 1980–90	50 years or older 1990	12 years + education 1980
			Percent			
1	Nonmet	$16,914	4.2	-9.2	27.1	58.5
	Metro	$14,627	5.1	8.0	23.3	69.4
2	Nonmet	$13,523	4.9	-9.2	25.9	48.9
	Metro	$13,431	4.8	5.2	19.4	66.0
3	Nonmet	$14,005	4.4	-5.2	37.0	49.5
	Metro	$14,930	6.1	1.1	25.1	65.0
4	Nonmet	$13,373	6.4	21.9	32.0	54.8
	Metro	$17,884	5.2	32.6	20.4	70.2
5	Nonmet	$12,644	6.6	3.9	32.8	51.2
	Metro	$12,877	6.2	9.1	28.7	58.4
6	Nonmet	$12,760	6.5	13.8	31.7	54.6
	Metro	$15,151	6.2	17.9	27.0	65.0
7	Nonmet	$13,017	5.6	-3.1	36.1	49.9
	Metro	$14,242	6.1	7.9	23.7	64.0
8	Nonmet	$10,585	7.2	15.3	25.6	53.4
	Metro	$10,008	10.7	23.3	18.4	60.0
9	Nonmet	$12,354	5.3	-1.8	24.2	51.4
	Metro	$14,644	5.8	13.9	20.9	65.7
10	Nonmet	$13,537	4.9	-0.9	33.1	50.9
	Metro	$13,964	5.6	16.1	26.4	60.0
11	Nonmet	$12,102	5.5	5.8	40.5	45.3
	Metro	$13,414	5.8	10.8	28.6	58.0
12	Nonmet	$12,714	4.2	22.6	36.8	48.1
	Metro	$15,343	4.6	45.6	18.5	72.8
13	Nonmet	$13,167	4.5	20.3	37.9	44.6
	Metro	$11,609	3.5	30.2	16.0	69.0
14	Nonmet	$11,831	6.2	9.3	30.5	49.9
15	Metro	$14,202	7.4	-3.2	25.4	62.8
16	Nonmet	$13,431	5.1	6.4	25.5	52.4
	Metro	$16,129	5.3	19.7	17.7	68.9
17	Nonmet	$12,687	4.6	5.6	33.8	45.1
	Metro	$14,647	5.0	8.1	21.3	58.0
18	Nonmet	$12,945	4.6	20.1	32.3	51.0
	Metro	$13,436	6.9	21.5	22.2	62.7
19	Nonmet	$5,043	32.7	40.7	20.5	28.4
	Metro	$7,453	10.8	34.2	19.5	42.0
20	Nonmet	$11,057	6.0	-0.3	24.9	48.7
	Metro	$12,408	6.9	7.3	21.3	57.8
21	Nonmet	$7,385	15.2	1.2	23.3	34.0
	Metro	$7,532	16.2	30.5	21.2	42.3
22	Nonmet	$12,878	5.6	7.0	34.7	52.5
	Metro	$13,462	6.2	15.5	23.0	64.1
23	Nonmet	$13,001	5.4	1.5	37.3	48.3
	Metro	$11,265	8.6	13.1	12.5	72.0
24	Nonmet	$7,993	15.3	7.2	21.2	40.8
Texas	Nonmet	$12,627	6.3	6.7	30.8	50.5
	Metro	$15,060	6.1	22.8	20.3	66.0

Data sources are listed on preceding graphs.

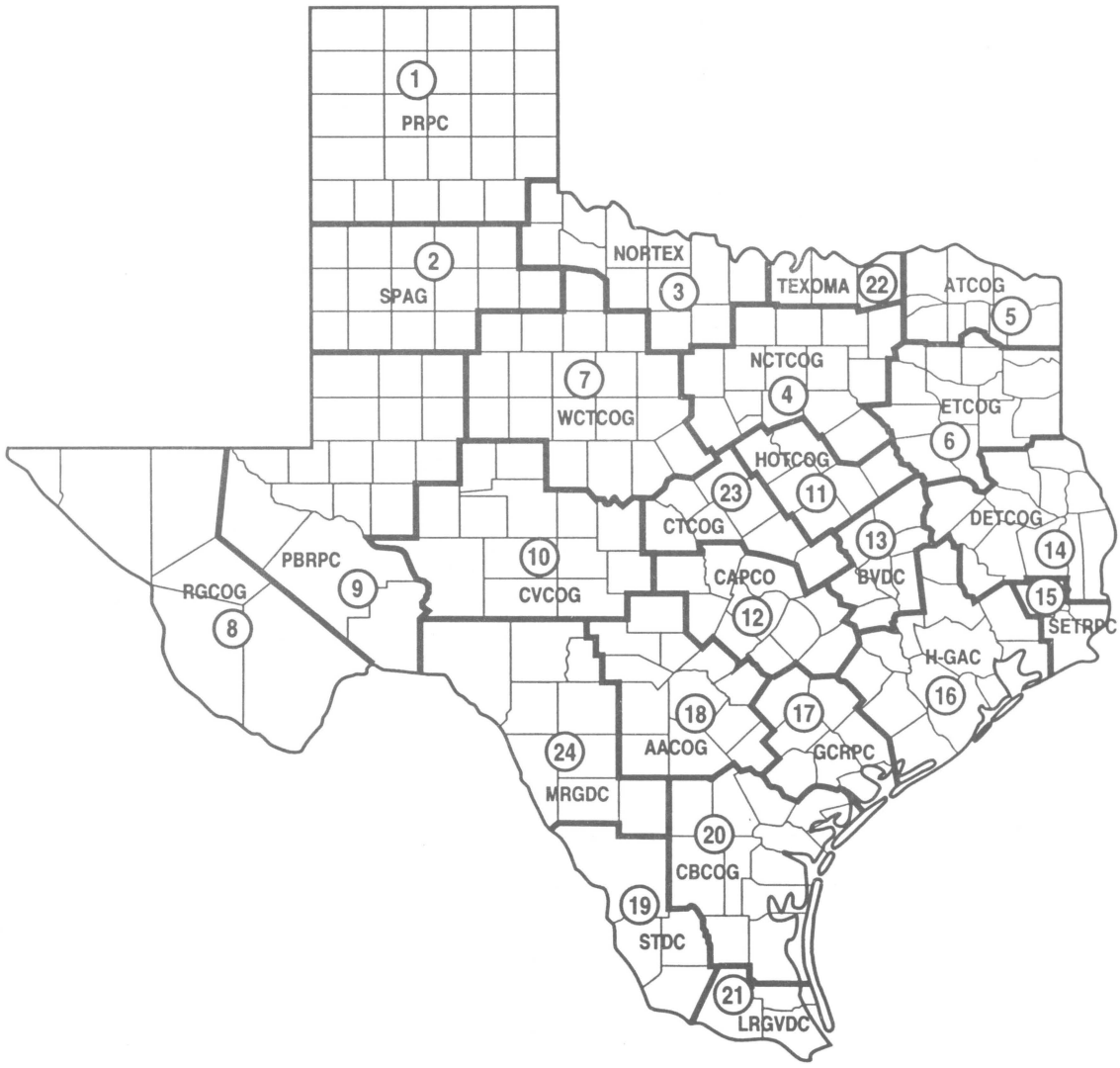

Figure 4. State planning regions and regional council membership.

nonadjacent counties experienced inmigration, while 70 percent of those rural counties adjacent to metropolitan areas grew in population. Between 1980 and 1987, net outmigration tended to be more concentrated among the agriculturally dependent counties in the Texas Panhandle (Figure 8a). Net inmigration was more widely spread among counties surrounding metropolitan centers, counties in the Midland/Odessa area and the Rio Grande Valley, and retirement destination counties in the Texas Hill Country and East Texas (Figure 8b).

The preliminary figures from the 1990 census reveal population declines in the Panhandle, South Plains and Rolling Plains Extension Districts (Figure 9 and Tables 1, 2 and 3). For districts that grew in population, nonmetropolitan counties grew at a slower pace than metropolitan counties. The rural counties that grew the fastest were located in the Rio Grande Valley and were the poorest counties with the lowest levels of educational attainment.

Selective outmigration has resulted in a rapidly aging population in many rural communities. Unfortunately, this has occurred at the same time the rural health care delivery system has been breaking down throughout the state. Texas leads the nation in hospital closures. Rural Texans are likely to feel the brunt of this loss in health services. The elderly consume three to four times more health care services than younger people, and Texas has the fifth largest population of aging residents. While persons 65 and older account for 10 percent of the state's total population, they comprise 20

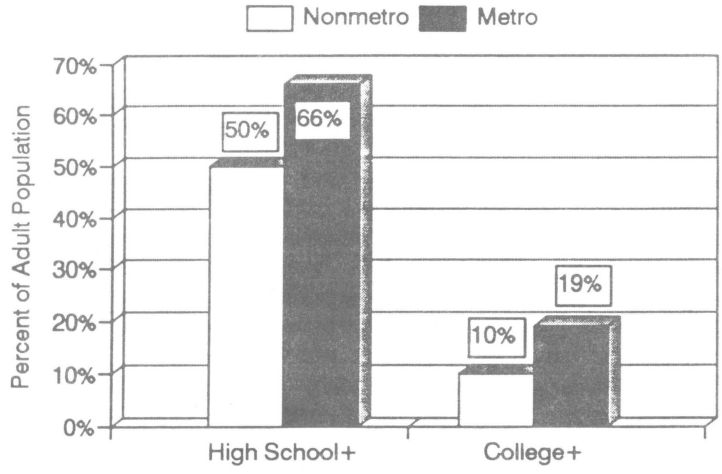

Figure 5. Average educational attainment of residents over 25 years of age, 1980.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census data.

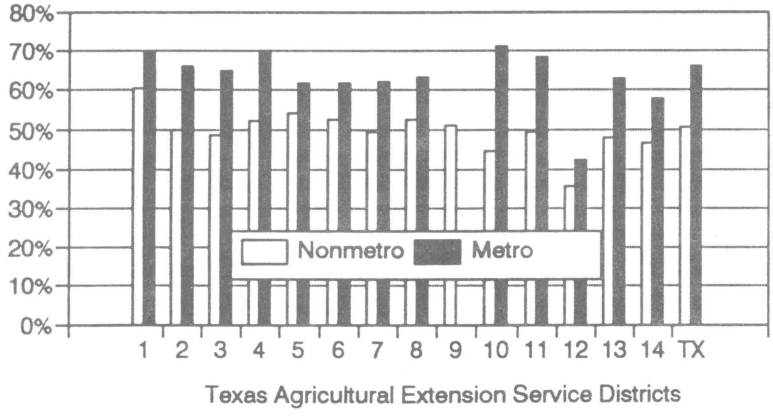

Figure 6. Percent of population 25 years and older with 12 or more years of education, 1980.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census data.

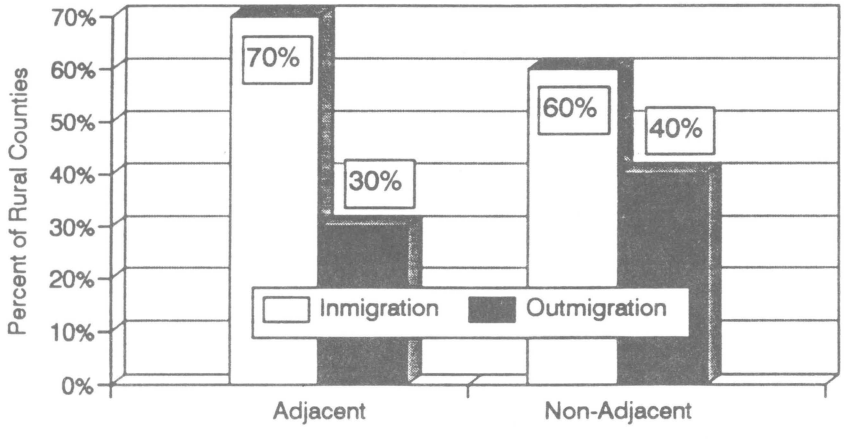

Figure 7. Rural counties by net migration 1980-1985

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census data.

percent or more of the population in many rural counties.

Rural Poverty

Demographic changes have not increased the earning capacity of rural Texans. In general, rural Texans have a lower per capita income level than their urban counterparts and that gap is widening. The poverty rate is higher in rural Texas. Economic recovery that has improved conditions somewhat in the state's metropolitan centers has not spread throughout the rural areas. In 1976 the per capita income of Texans living in metropolitan counties was $6,600, while the per capita income level for Texans living in nonmetropolitan counties was $5,300 (Figure 10). By 1988, per capita income in metropolitan Texas was $15,060 and only $12,627 in nonmetropolitan Texas.

Not all rural counties have low per capita income levels. Data reveals a concentration of higher per capita income counties in the Texas Panhandle (rural and agriculturally dependent counties), metropolitan counties and counties along the Gulf of Mexico (Figure 11). Lower per capita income counties are concentrated along the border with Mexico and in the east central part of the state.

Five Texas counties are classified as persistently poor since they have been among the poorest 10 percent of all U.S. counties for the last 5 decennial census years. These counties are Marion, Newton, San Jacinto, Duval and Starr. Marion and Newton Counties are located along the Louisiana border. San Jacinto County is located in East Texas northeast of Houston. Duval and Starr Counties are located in deep South Texas with Starr County bordering Mexico. Starr and San Jacinto Counties experienced large increases in their populations between 1980 and 1990, 49 percent and 43 percent, respectively (Table 3). Duval and Newton Counties experienced

very small increases, 3 percent and 2 percent, while Marion County's population declined by 4 percent over that time period. All five counties experienced increases in per capita income from 1976 through 1981, followed by a period of questionable performance that finally resulted in increases between 1987 and 1988. Starr County continues to rank the lowest in the state with a per capita income level of $4,317 in 1988.

Although rural Texas has five counties ranked among the poorest in the United States, some of the state's highest per capita incomes are also found in rural Texas. Much of the selective outmigration is occurring in these high-income Panhandle counties that are dependent on agriculture.

Not only are many rural residents poorer than their urban counterparts, but they also have not yet benefited from the economic recovery that has been coming slowly to Texas. Between 1976 and 1988, employment in metropolitan counties increased by 45 percent compared to only 17 percent in nonmetropolitan counties (Figure 12). In 1990 unemployment rates in nonmetropolitan counties were greater than in metropolitan counties (Table 1). This represented a major change from previous years.

During those years when urban unemployment rates were higher than rural unemployment rates, economists argued that rural unemployment was understated because of the discouraged worker problem (i.e., discouraged workers not actively seeking a job are not considered unemployed). This argument is still valid and may mean that rural areas have fallen even further behind urban areas.

An examination of the median price per acre for Texas rural land during the 1980s further highlights the lack of economic recovery. All Texas counties experienced reductions in rural land prices during the 1980s, and prices per acre de-

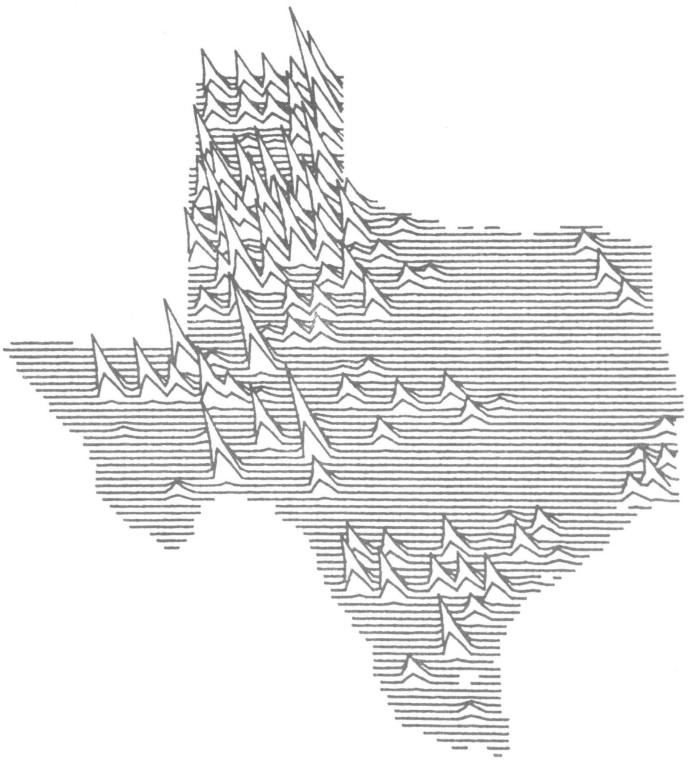

Figure 8a. Percent outmigration, 1980-1987.

Source: Steve H. Murdock, R. Hamm, D. Fannin, R. Saenz, B. Pecotte, K. Backman, N. Hoque, "The Current and Future State of the Population of Texas Technical Appendices," Department of Rural Sociology, Texas A&M University, 1989.

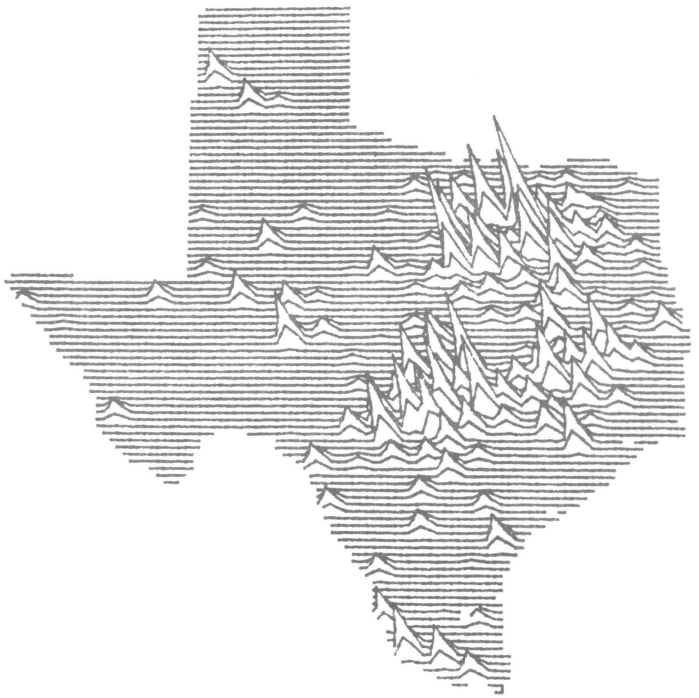

Figure 8b. Percent inmigration, 1980-1987.

Source: Steve H. Murdock, R. Hamm, D. Fannin, R. Saenz, B. Pecotte, K. Backman, N. Hoque, "The Current and Future State of the Population of Texas Technical Appendices," Department of Rural Sociology, Texas A&M University, 1989.

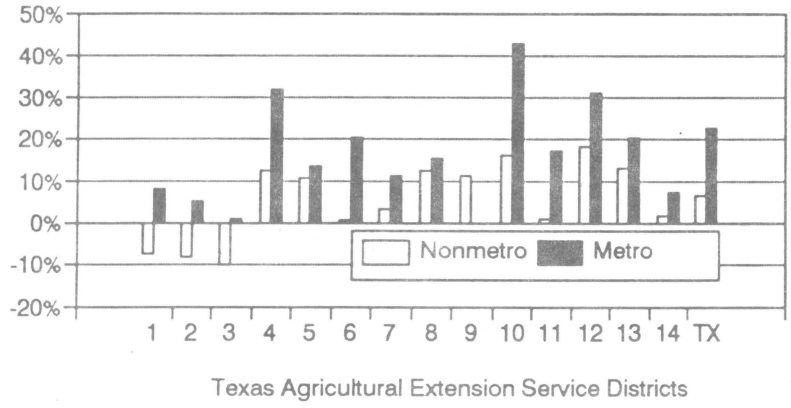

Figure 9. Population change, 1980 to 1990.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census data.

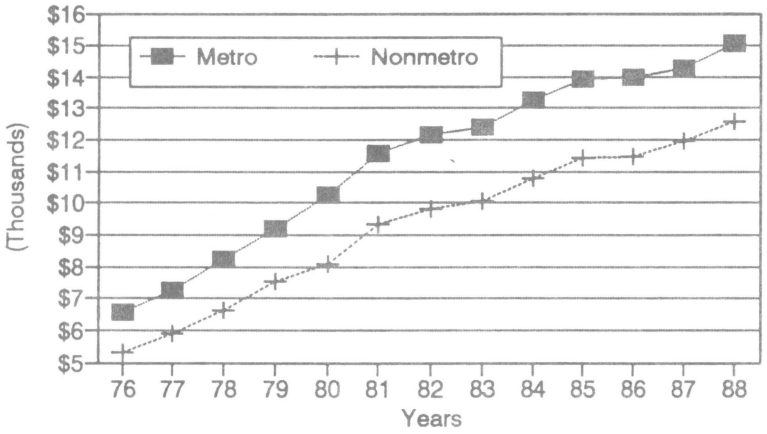

Figure 10. Texas per capita income, 1976-1988.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

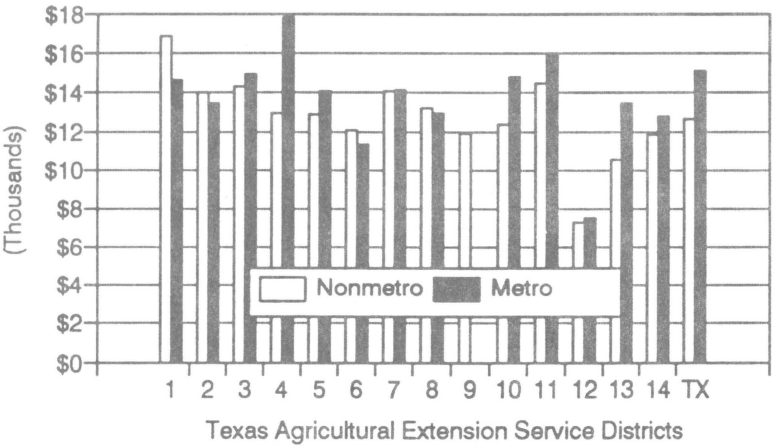

Figure 11. Per capita income, 1988.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census data.

clined 37 percent by 1988 (Figure 13 and Table 4). An area of far West Texas, including Brewster County, was the hardest hit. They experienced a cumulative reduction in rural land median price per acre of 63 percent. An area near Fort Worth experienced the least damage with only a 9 percent reduction.

In contrast, the metropolitan areas of the state have been enjoying strengthening economies. Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, San Antonio and Austin were all affected by the downturn in the Texas economy. Although Houston's dependence on the oil industry made it the hardest hit of the metropolitan areas, the city's efforts at economic diversification have paid off and it is now leading the state's recovery.

Diversification and Specialization

Sources of income are quite different in rural and urban Texas. Service-providing industries, which include retail and wholesale trade, public utilities, transportation and government, are the leading sources of income in metropolitan counties. These industries provided 54 percent of personal income for metropolitan county residents and only 33 percent for nonmetropolitan residents (Figure 14). Nonmetropolitan residents were much more dependent upon passive income sources that include dividends, interest, rent and transfer payments. Passive income comprised 38 percent of total income for rural residents in 1988 compared to 26 percent for residents of metropolitan counties.

Passive income has increased in relative importance in both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties, but the increase was much more dramatic in nonmetropolitan counties (Figures 15 and 16). The contour map, Figure 21, shows the spatial distribution of this phenomenon throughout the state. The counties with the great-

est dependence on passive income sources – dividends, interest, rents and transfer payments – are nonmetropolitan. Since 1981 the relative importance of goods-producing industries has decreased in both areas with a greater relative decrease in nonmetropolitan counties. Service-producing industries have increased in relative importance in metropolitan counties while decreasing in nonmetropolitan counties.

Rural areas in the state have diversified their economic efforts and moved beyond dependence upon agriculture. Income sources in these areas now include such industries as mining, manufacturing, retirement and tourism. However, a closer examination reveals large regions of rural Texas still dependent upon single industries in spite of the fact that rural areas in total have diversified.

The rural counties of Texas can be grouped into four categories based on major sources of income: farming-dependent counties, mining-dependent counties, manufacturing-dependent counties, and retirement destination counties.

Farming-dependent counties. In these counties, farming contributed a weighted annual average of 20 percent or more of total income between 1975 and 1979. The counties dependent on farming are concentrated in the Texas Panhandle and sparsely sprinkled throughout the rest of the state (Figure 17). Farming-dependent counties have the following common characteristics:

- Located in areas remote from metropolitan areas and regional population centers.
- Large population losses in the 1960s, below average gains in the 1970s and population loss during the 1980s.
- Uneven income distributions characterized by high average per capita incomes but low median family incomes.

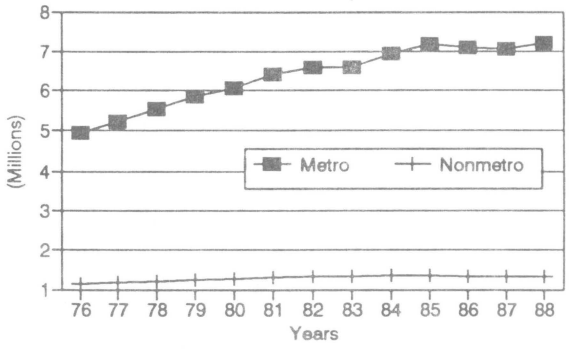

Figure 12. Texas employment, 1976-1988.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

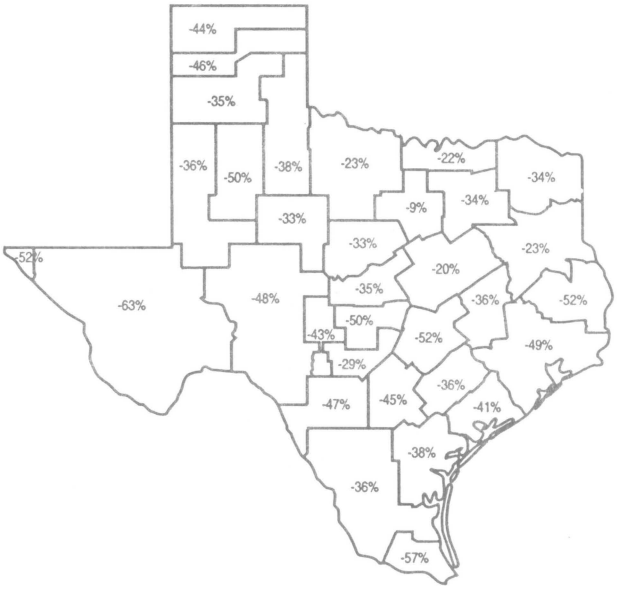

Figure 13. Cumulative percentage reductions in Texas rural land median price per acre through 1988.

Source: Gilliland, Charles E. "Texas Rural Land Prices, 1988." Real Estate Center, Texas A&M University, August 1989.

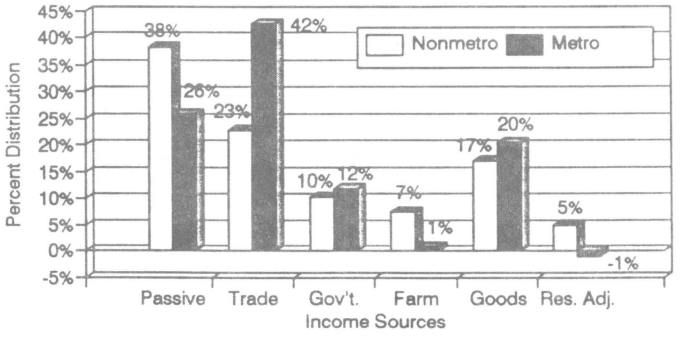

Figure 14. Sources of personal income, 1988.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

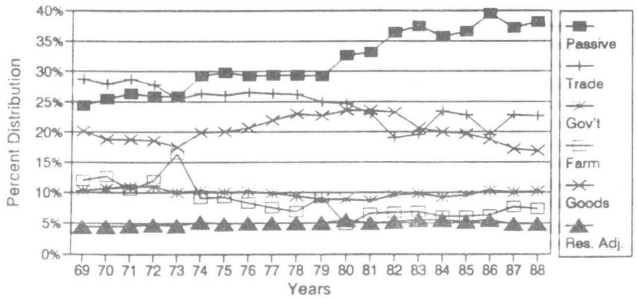

Figure 15. Trends in personal income sources non-metropolitan counties, 1969-1988.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

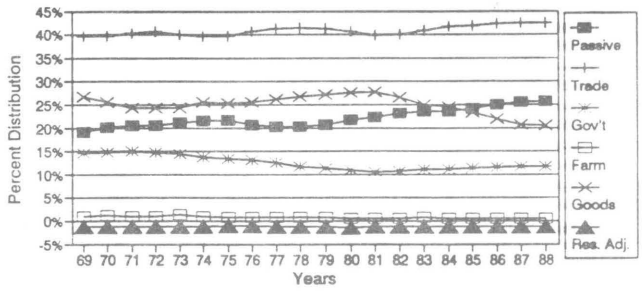

Figure 16. Trends in personal income sources metropolitan counties, 1969-1988.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

- High proportion of people who are over 65 years old and receive social security benefits or other transfer payments.

Manufacturing-dependent counties. These are counties in which manufacturing contributed 30 percent or more of total labor and proprietor income in 1979. The counties in Texas dependent on manufacturing are located primarily in East Texas with a small group in the central Panhandle region (Figure 18). Characteristics common to these counties include the following:

- Located near metropolitan centers and have larger, urbanized populations.
- Greater than average population increases in the 1960s followed by average gains in the 1970s.
- Larger than proportionate black populations, reflecting primarily the regional concentrations in East Texas.
- Slightly lower proportions of income from services-producing sectors.

Mining-dependent counties. In these counties, mining contributed 20 percent or more of the total income in 1979. Mining-dependent counties are located in large groups in West Texas, the eastern corner of the Panhandle and South Central Texas (Figure 19). Common characteristics shared by these counties include the following:

- Located at natural resource sites that are usually remote from large metropolitan centers but have average concentrations of urban populations.
- Experience high rates of population change reflecting the wide swings in demand for energy and mineral resources from one decade to another.
- Occasionally enjoy high income levels.
- Lower than average concentrations of service activities. (This may reflect the uncertainty of continued mining at particular sites or the uncertainty produced by the wide swings in demand for fuels and minerals.)

Retirement destination counties. For the 1970-80 period, net inmigration rates of people aged 60 and over were 15 percent or more of the expected 1980 population aged 60 and over. In Texas, the retirement counties are mainly located on a diagonal line from Texarkana to Del Rio and represent a large portion of the state (Figure 20). Common characteristics of these counties are as follows:

- High population growth rates in the '60s and '70s.
- Usually located in remote rural areas.
- Large proportions of income from transfer payments and other passive sources (Figure 21).
- Larger services-producing sectors.
- Population size probably will continue to increase as the average age of the general population increases.

The tendency for groups of counties to be dependent on a single industry ties large areas of the state to the health of single industries. The crisis in oil and gas prices and

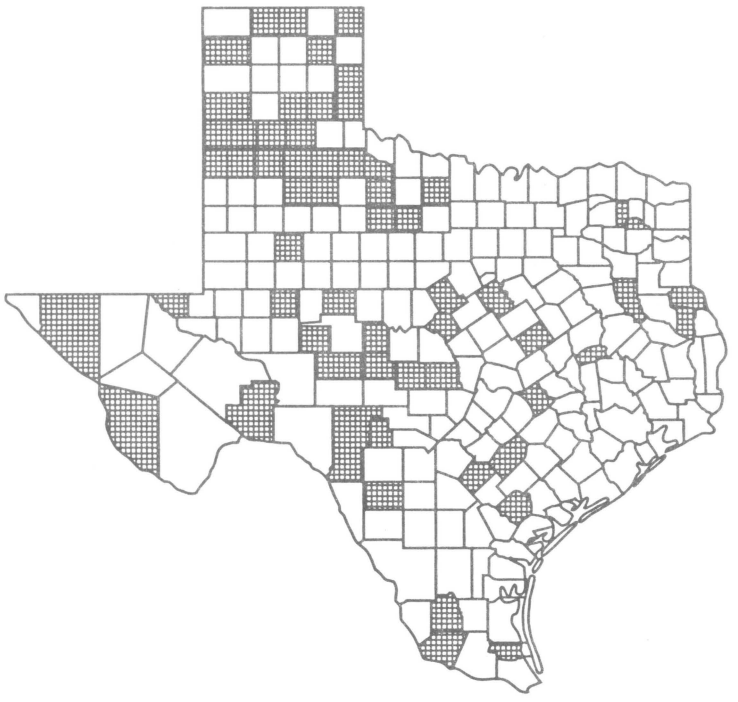

Figure 17. Farming-dependent rural counties*.

*Farming contributed a weighted average of 20% or more to total labor and proprietor income over the 5-year period from 1975 to 1979.

Source: Lloyd D. Bender, B. Green, T. Hady, J. Kuehn, M. Nelson, L. Perkinson, P. Ross, "The Diverse Social and Economic Structure of Nonmetropolitan America," USDA-ERS, Rural Development Research Report, Number 49, Washington, DC, September 1985.

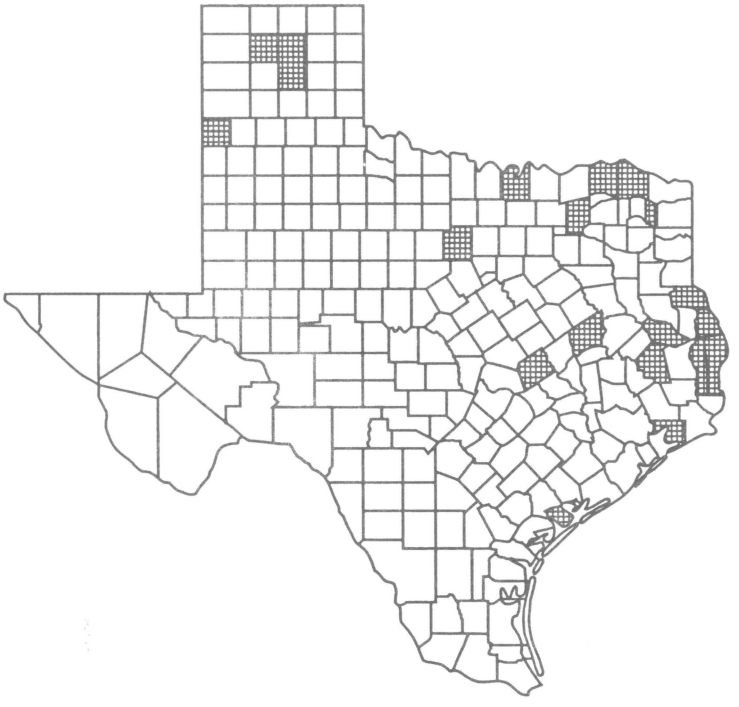

Figure 18. Manufacturing-dependent rural counties*.

*Manufacturing contributed 30% or more of total labor and proprietor income in 1979.

Source: Lloyd D. Bender, B. Green, T. Hady, J. Kuehn, M. Nelson, L. Perkinson, P. Ross, "The Diverse Social and Economic Structure of Nonmetropolitan America," USDA-ERS, Rural Development Research Report, Number 49, Washington, DC, September 1985.

in agricultural prices in the 1980s resulted in economic difficulty for major rural portions of the state. The further dependence of some metropolitan economies, particularly Houston, upon petroleum-related activity reduced the state's capacity to recover. The second drop in petroleum prices (1986) further damaged the Texas economy while the remainder of the nation experienced economic recovery based partially on low-energy prices.

Summary

Selective outmigration has left rural Texas poorly equipped to deal with the challenges of declining economic activity, eroding tax bases, deteriorating rural health care delivery systems, and increasing demands on local schools. Single industry dependence leaves rural areas increasingly vulnerable to international competition, exchange rates, and monetary and fiscal policy. Rural areas are diverse with some doing much better than others. This diversity defies any single solution to the "rural problem." Thus, investment in human capital and technical assistance is needed to assist rural leaders in their quest to identify and choose feasible and appropriate options for their local economies.

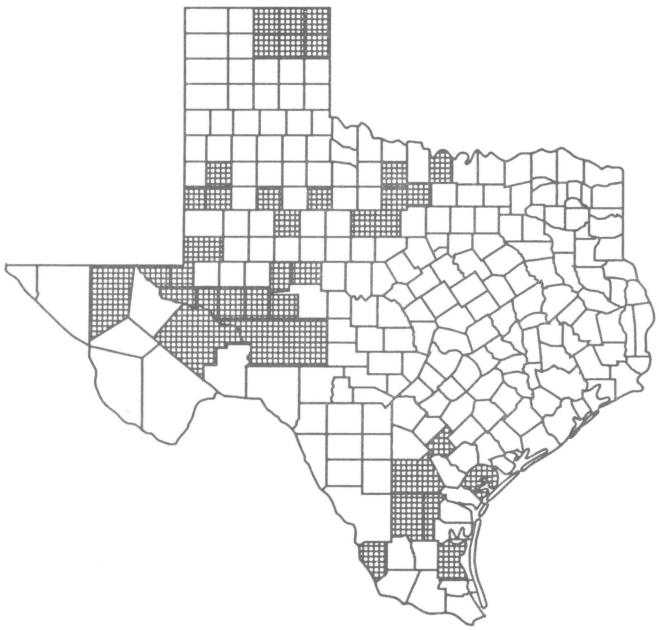

Figure 19. Mining-dependent rural counties.

*Mining contributed 20% or more of total labor and proprietor income in 1979.

Source: Lloyd D. Bender, B. Green, T. Hady, J. Kuehn, M. Nelson, L. Perkinson, P. Ross, "The Diverse Social and Economic Structure of Nonmetropolitan America," USDA-ERS, Rural Development Research Report, Number 49, Washington, DC, September 1985.

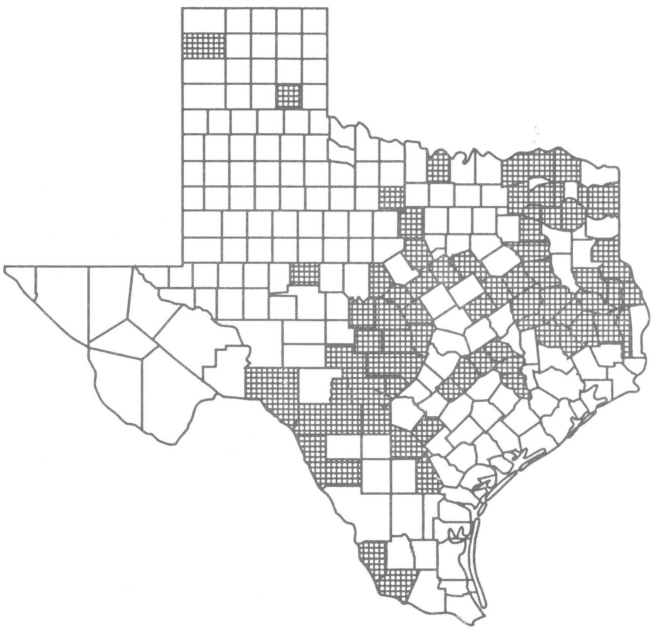

Figure 20. Retirement destination rural counties.

*Counties with 15% or more net inmigration of cohorts age 60 and over from 1970 to 1980.

Source: Lloyd D. Bender, B. Green, T. Hady, J. Kuehn, M. Nelson, L. Perkinson, P. Ross, "The Diverse Social and Economic Structure of Nonmetropolitan America," USDA-ERS, Rural Development Research Report, Number 49, Washington, DC, September 1985.

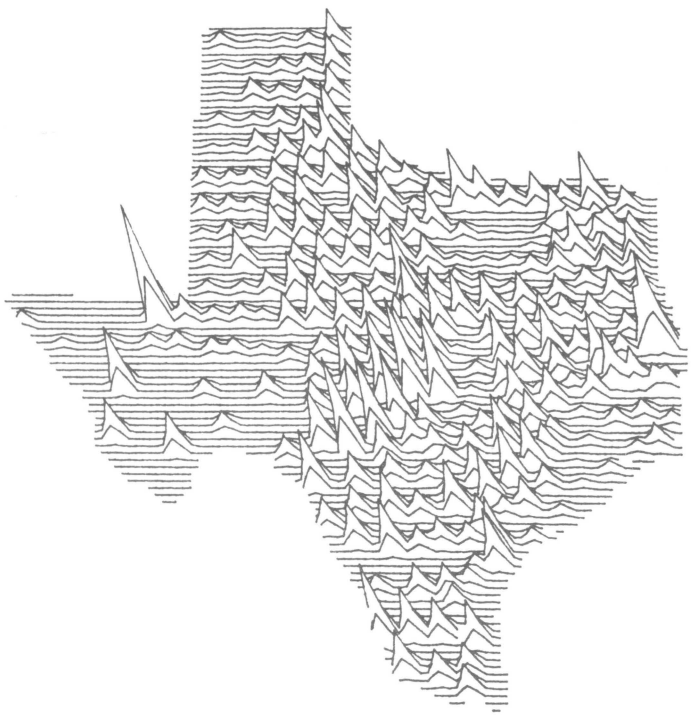

Figure 21. Percent of income from passive sources , 1988.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Program Unit, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

Table 3. Selected statistics for Texas counties.

County name	Per capita income 1988	Unemployment rate 1990	Population change 1980–90	50 years or older 1990	12 years + education 1980
		Percent			
Anderson	$11,157	6.1	25.1	28.7	51.0
Andrews	$12,866	4.0	7.6	21.3	55.0
Angelina	$13,330	6.3	8.9	25.1	54.0
Aransas	$12,327	4.4	25.5	34.6	58.0
Archer	$14,349	3.9	9.7	29.5	57.0
Armstrong	$18,515	5.3	1.4	37.3	66.0
Atascosa	$10,200	7.2	21.9	26.1	46.0
Austin	$15,774	3.5	11.9	34.5	46.0
Bailey	$16,532	3.7	-13.5	26.0	49.0
Bandera	$14,161	2.7	49.1	39.6	65.0
Bastrop	$11,576	4.8	54.7	31.9	49.0
Baylor	$15,190	3.7	-10.9	42.9	50.0
Bee	$10,118	6.5	-3.4	22.5	50.0
Bell	$12,973	6.7	21.1	18.7	67.0
Bexar	$13,340	7.1	19.9	21.6	63.0
Blanco	$13,595	2.5	27.6	39.6	54.0
Borden	$18,883	4.3	-7.0	28.0	51.0
Bosque	$14,397	6.2	12.9	45.9	48.0
Bowie	$13,518	6.4	8.5	28.9	60.0
Brazoria	$15,638	5.5	13.0	17.3	65.0
Brazos	$11,609	3.5	30.2	16.0	69.0
Brewster	$11,396	4.1	14.6	25.9	68.0
Briscoe	$19,104	2.4	-23.6	33.8	53.0
Brooks	$7,696	7.1	-2.7	27.3	41.0
Brown	$12,688	6.4	4.0	32.5	57.0
Burleson	$10,912	5.6	10.7	35.7	42.0
Burnet	$13,820	4.1	27.4	42.5	52.0
Caldwell	$10,303	5.7	11.7	28.4	47.0
Calhoun	$12,007	5.8	-2.7	22.8	54.0
Callahan	$11,380	4.6	7.9	35.3	54.0
Cameron	$7,868	11.7	24.0	21.6	44.0
Camp	$14,646	5.8	6.8	33.5	51.0
Carson	$15,419	3.4	-1.4	29.7	63.0
Cass	$12,032	6.9	1.9	31.2	52.0
Castro	$13,299	4.3	-14.1	19.4	52.0
Chambers	$12,760	4.6	8.4	20.5	58.0
Cherokee	$12,099	5.7	7.7	34.0	50.0
Childress	$12,514	6.1	-14.3	39.5	48.0
Clay	$14,707	3.9	4.6	34.5	50.0
Cochran	$14,972	4.0	-9.3	24.0	48.0
Coke	$14,415	1.8	7.1	44.3	53.0
Coleman	$13,625	7.7	-7.0	44.3	44.0
Collin	$21,250	4.6	82.6	15.0	76.0
Collingsworth	$12,543	4.7	-23.1	38.1	53.0
Colorado	$14,030	3.6	-2.3	35.1	42.0
Comal	$15,869	5.0	42.2	31.5	60.0
Comanche	$12,895	6.4	6.1	41.2	45.0
Concho	$16,494	3.9	4.4	41.1	49.0
Cooke	$12,737	5.1	11.3	30.2	58.0
Coryell	$11,265	8.6	13.1	12.5	72.0
Cottle	$16,050	3.0	-23.8	39.9	42.0

Table 3. (continued)

County name	Per capita income 1988	Unemployment rate 1990	Population change 1980–90	50 years or older 1990	12 years + education 1980
		Percent			
Crane	$13,431	4.3	1.1	22.6	58.0
Crockett	$13,212	5.8	-11.5	22.1	50.0
Crosby	$12,555	4.7	-17.6	28.1	45.0
Culberson	$10,754	6.8	2.8	18.5	44.0
Dallam	$17,172	3.5	-16.4	26.5	58.0
Dallas	$18,647	5.3	19.0	20.0	71.0
Dawson	$13,443	7.4	-11.3	27.8	43.0
Deaf Smith	$14,479	5.7	-9.5	20.2	51.0
Delta	$12,639	5.4	0.4	45.3	42.0
Denton	$18,332	4.8	91.1	15.7	77.0
DeWitt	$13,012	5.3	-0.3	38.8	40.0
Dickens	$13,086	4.4	-27.4	40.3	40.0
Dimmit	$6,373	11.9	-8.2	22.6	35.0
Donley	$15,595	3.7	-9.3	41.6	53.0
Duval	$9,715	7.9	3.2	28.5	37.0
Eastland	$11,164	6.1	-5.1	41.0	50.0
Ector	$12,664	6.0	3.1	20.1	61.0
Edwards	$12,541	7.1	11.5	28.5	50.0
Ellis	$14,433	5.6	42.6	26.3	56.0
El Paso	$10,008	10.7	23.3	18.4	60.0
Erath	$13,895	4.6	24.1	34.2	58.0
Falls	$11,417	4.4	-1.3	41.3	42.0
Fannin	$13,055	6.2	2.1	40.4	47.0
Fayette	$15,425	2.8	6.7	43.6	40.0
Fisher	$12,218	6.4	-17.8	38.6	47.0
Floyd	$13,495	4.5	-13.6	29.7	45.0
Foard	$16,782	2.1	-16.9	42.9	48.0
Fort Bend	$16,150	3.5	72.1	13.7	72.0
Franklin	$12,928	4.9	13.2	36.7	51.0
Freestone	$11,676	6.4	6.7	36.9	49.0
Frio	$7,478	6.9	-2.3	22.7	41.0
Gaines	$11,441	4.8	7.4	21.5	51.0
Galveston	$15,570	7.1	11.1	24.0	65.0
Garza	$11,249	5.0	-3.6	28.9	44.0
Gillespie	$16,278	2.4	27.1	41.7	53.0
Glasscock	$20,432	1.8	11.0	20.3	51.0
Goliad	$13,057	5.8	15.2	32.4	44.0
Gonzales	$12,010	3.8	1.5	34.8	41.0
Gray	$17,311	4.6	-9.2	31.2	61.0
Grayson	$14,353	5.3	5.8	31.2	60.0
Gregg	$14,184	7.3	5.5	25.1	66.0
Grimes	$11,115	4.0	38.6	39.8	46.0
Guadalupe	$13,305	4.4	38.9	25.5	58.0
Hale	$12,520	5.4	-7.8	25.2	53.0
Hall	$14,663	6.9	-30.2	39.3	48.0
Hamilton	$13,616	4.2	-6.8	47.2	46.0
Hansford	$22,900	3.0	-5.8	24.0	66.0
Hardeman	$13,992	6.3	-17.0	40.6	47.0
Hardin	$11,866	6.5	1.5	24.1	57.0
Harris	$16,447	5.3	17.0	17.3	70.0
Harrison	$11,984	6.0	10.0	28.5	56.0

Table 3. (continued)

County name	Per capita income 1988	Unemployment rate 1990	Population change 1980–90	50 years or older 1990	12 years + education 1980
		Percent			
Hartley	$21,756	2.5	-8.9	27.1	73.0
Haskell	$15,839	3.5	-11.7	41.8	44.0
Hays	$11,724	4.6	61.6	19.2	62.0
Hemphill	$16,051	4.0	-29.9	21.4	56.0
Henderson	$12,067	8.9	37.4	36.9	51.0
Hidalgo	$7,303	19.1	35.4	20.9	41.0
Hill	$12,446	6.2	8.5	40.6	46.0
Hockley	$12,261	4.8	4.2	22.2	52.0
Hood	$15,430	8.2	63.6	33.7	62.0
Hopkins	$13,045	5.9	14.2	32.9	51.0
Houston	$12,982	5.2	-4.1	34.0	48.0
Howard	$13,522	5.0	-2.4	28.8	54.0
Hudspeth	$13,236	3.5	6.9	21.3	46.0
Hunt	$13,521	6.1	16.5	29.9	57.0
Hutchinson	$16,773	4.3	-2.3	30.8	64.0
Irion	$14,661	3.1	17.5	29.4	59.0
Jack	$12,340	4.5	-5.8	35.8	49.0
Jackson	$14,439	3.6	-2.3	29.6	46.0
Jasper	$12,212	8.0	1.0	29.3	52.0
Jeff Davis	$12,074	3.5	18.2	30.7	55.0
Jefferson	$15,058	7.0	-3.7	27.1	64.0
Jim Hogg	$10,518	8.7	-1.1	26.5	35.0
Jim Wells	$9,805	6.7	3.2	23.4	43.0
Johnson	$13,764	5.1	43.6	25.4	60.0
Jones	$13,008	5.9	-4.5	36.1	47.0
Karnes	$10,701	4.7	-8.4	31.9	39.0
Kaufman	$13,541	4.9	33.8	28.7	52.0
Kendall	$17,875	2.7	37.2	32.0	65.0
Kenedy	$19,782	1.7	-15.3	29.8	33.9
Kent	$13,205	1.9	-11.8	40.9	53.0
Kerr	$16,191	3.1	26.1	42.7	64.0
Kimble	$14,203	2.4	1.5	38.6	52.0
King	$16,010	1.5	-16.7	23.0	66.9
Kinney	$11,662	5.6	36.9	34.8	40.0
Kleberg	$11,822	6.2	-9.2	18.1	59.0
Knox	$12,261	3.2	-9.2	41.0	46.0
Lamar	$13,011	6.6	4.3	32.4	53.0
Lamb	$16,577	5.0	-19.3	30.0	46.0
Lampasas	$11,796	6.0	12.6	31.5	57.0
LaSalle	$8,476	7.5	-4.7	25.5	30.0
Lavaca	$14,216	2.0	-1.7	41.2	39.0
Lee	$12,980	4.7	17.4	33.9	44.0
Leon	$13,780	5.4	32.0	43.1	45.0
Liberty	$12,032	6.9	12.0	25.7	50.0
Limestone	$11,013	4.6	3.6	38.7	43.0
Lipscomb	$16,498	3.1	-16.5	27.9	64.0
Live Oak	$13,274	4.3	-0.5	29.5	47.0
Llano	$15,616	3.0	14.7	56.3	56.0
Loving	$26,030	0.0	17.6	44.0	55.1
Lubbock	$13,431	4.8	5.2	19.4	66.0
Lynn	$15,423	4.4	-21.5	27.9	43.0

Table 3. (continued)

County name	Per capita income 1988	Unemployment rate 1990	Population change 1980–90	50 years or older 1990	12 years + education 1980
		Percent			
McCulloch	$13,638	10.2	0.5	41.4	45.0
McLennan	$13,414	5.8	10.8	28.6	58.0
McMullen	$17,730	0.6	3.5	33.6	51.9
Madison	$11,594	3.7	2.6	29.7	49.0
Marion	$10,502	5.9	-3.6	35.6	48.0
Martin	$16,105	1.5	5.8	27.2	48.0
Mason	$13,526	2.7	-7.1	43.2	50.0
Matagorda	$15,387	10.4	-2.4	24.0	54.0
Maverick	$5,568	26.8	15.9	17.8	32.0
Medina	$11,692	5.8	17.9	28.8	45.0
Menard	$13,840	4.8	-4.0	42.0	44.0
Midland	$16,944	5.5	29.0	21.9	72.0
Milam	$13,101	6.1	0.9	34.6	45.0
Mills	$14,320	3.2	1.2	47.2	45.0
Mitchell	$12,644	6.7	-11.8	36.3	47.0
Montague	$12,089	5.1	-0.8	39.6	46.0
Montogomery	$14,073	5.1	43.2	18.4	66.0
Moore	$16,610	3.5	7.8	21.4	60.0
Morris	$12,323	13.6	-9.8	28.9	54.0
Motley	$13,400	2.5	-21.4	44.8	52.0
Nacogdoches	$12,156	5.1	17.0	24.6	58.0
Navarro	$12,830	6.9	13.0	35.6	49.0
Newton	$9,186	9.3	2.4	28.2	45.0
Nolan	$13,668	7.2	-4.4	31.8	49.0
Nueces	$12,667	6.8	8.5	21.4	59.0
Ochiltree	$15,102	3.8	-4.8	22.8	66.0
Oldham	$19,232	4.3	-0.2	20.3	64.0
Orange	$12,887	8.8	-4.0	21.1	62.0
Palo Pinto	$12,442	6.4	4.1	32.2	54.0
Panola	$13,638	4.4	6.3	31.5	52.0
Parker	$14,154	4.4	45.2	26.9	59.0
Parmer	$21,653	3.6	-10.6	22.4	52.0
Pecos	$9,263	6.1	0.4	19.7	49.0
Polk	$11,091	6.8	25.7	35.9	46.0
Potter	$13,960	6.2	-0.8	26.7	60.0
Presidio	$7,890	16.6	27.9	30.1	41.0
Rains	$11,720	5.8	38.8	39.1	43.0
Randall	$15,360	3.9	19.5	19.7	82.0
Reagan	$12,263	4.0	9.2	17.7	55.0
Real	$10,767	5.7	-2.3	34.7	47.0
Red River	$10,588	7.0	-11.1	37.8	44.0
Reeves	$10,060	8.7	0.3	20.8	44.0
Refugio	$16,187	3.4	-14.1	29.7	44.0
Roberts	$14,679	6.0	-13.6	26.6	64.0
Robertson	$11,707	6.3	5.9	38.8	40.0
Rockwall	$16,807	3.3	76.2	20.9	70.0
Runnels	$14,785	4.1	-4.9	38.6	42.0
Rusk	$13,415	7.4	5.7	33.5	53.0
Sabine	$10,541	7.3	10.2	40.0	42.0
San Augustine	$10,166	4.9	-8.9	37.5	38.0
San Jacinto	$9,336	4.9	43.2	31.0	44.0

Table 3. (continued)

County name	Per capita income 1988	Unemployment rate 1990	Population change 1980–90	50 years or older 1990	12 years + education 1980
		Percent			
San Patricio	$11,127	7.1	1.3	20.8	52.0
San Saba	$13,763	5.2	-7.5	41.8	50.0
Schleicher	$12,513	5.3	6.0	27.8	55.0
Scurry	$13,727	4.6	2.4	28.5	56.0
Shackleford	$15,866	3.0	-15.3	35.3	52.0
Shelby	$11,000	5.7	-4.5	35.4	44.0
Sherman	$27,925	2.4	-10.0	27.4	64.0
Smith	$15,151	6.2	17.9	27.0	65.0
Somervell	$13,740	18.7	29.0	28.0	51.0
Starr	$4,317	36.1	48.6	19.7	27.0
Stephens	$11,979	4.4	-9.2	34.5	52.0
Sterling	$12,135	2.2	19.2	28.7	53.0
Stonewall	$15,122	3.8	-16.3	40.4	48.0
Sutton	$12,432	4.8	-19.4	19.2	59.0
Swisher	$17,630	4.3	-16.4	28.6	50.0
Tarrant	$16,929	5.3	35.9	21.5	70.0
Taylor	$14,242	6.1	7.9	23.7	64.0
Terrell	$16,113	1.9	-11.6	27.9	60.0
Terry	$12,722	6.1	-9.3	25.1	49.0
Throckmorton	$16,672	1.6	-8.4	43.3	50.0
Titus	$13,679	5.6	12.0	31.1	53.0
Tom Green	$13,964	5.6	16.1	26.4	60.0
Travis	$16,134	4.6	37.4	17.9	75.0
Trinity	$10,022	5.4	21.1	40.0	45.0
Tyler	$12,197	6.0	2.6	35.6	50.0
Upsher	$11,426	4.9	9.7	30.1	54.0
Upton	$11,537	3.4	-3.7	22.9	53.0
Uvalde	$10,770	10.1	4.0	25.6	47.0
Val Verde	$8,873	12.6	7.8	18.5	51.0
Van Zandt	$12,306	5.5	20.7	35.8	49.0
Victoria	$14,647	5.0	8.1	21.3	58.0
Walker	$10,951	3.5	21.8	19.7	61.0
Waller	$11,997	5.0	18.1	23.5	58.0
Ward	$12,426	5.3	-6.2	22.8	58.0
Washington	$16,494	3.0	18.9	34.9	48.0
Webb	$7,453	10.8	34.2	19.5	42.0
Wharton	$13,715	4.3	-0.7	28.3	48.0
Wheeler	$15,618	3.9	-17.6	35.2	55.0
Wichita	$14,930	6.1	1.1	25.1	65.0
Wilbarger	$13,398	4.3	-5.1	36.8	50.0
Willacy	$7,385	15.2	1.2	23.3	34.0
Williamson	$13,714	4.1	82.4	20.7	66.0
Wilson	$11,770	4.2	35.2	27.8	45.0
Winkler	$11,010	5.2	-13.3	24.6	53.0
Wise	$12,111	4.7	30.5	29.4	52.0
Wood	$13,066	5.7	19.0	38.1	51.0
Yoakum	$14,216	3.5	5.9	20.7	52.0
Young	$16,269	4.2	-5.0	35.0	52.0
Zapata	$7,334	10.5	40.0	32.4	41.0
Zavala	$6,507	17.1	4.3	22.1	26.0

Data sources are listed on preceding graphs.

Table 4. Cumulative percentage reductions in Texas rural land median price per acre.

Land market area	Year of low	Low (%)	Through 1988 (%)	Year of high
1 Panhandle - North	1987	-57	-44	1981
2 Panhandle - Central	1987	-47	-35	1982
3 South Plains	1987	-54	-50	1982
4 Permian - West	1987	-55	-36	1983
5 Canadian Breaks	1988	-46	-46	1982
6 Rolling Plains - North	1987	-42	-38	1984
7 Rolling Plains - Central	1988	-33	-33	1982
8 Trans Pecos	1987	-70	-63	1983
9 Edwards Plateau - West	1987	-49	-48	1985
10 Edwards Plateau - South	1988	-47	-47	1985
11 Rio Grande Plains	1988	-36	-36	1984
12 North Central Plains	1988	-23	-23	1985
13 Crosstimbers	1988	-33	-33	1985
14 Hill Country - North	1988	-35	-35	1985
15 Hill Country - West	1988	-43	-43	1986
16 Highland Lakes	1988	-50	-50	1985
17 Hill Country - South	1987	-37	-29	1985
18 San Antonio	1988	-45	-45	1984
19 Coastal Prairie - North	1988	-36	-36	1984
20 Coastal Prairie - South	1988	-38	-38	1984
21 Coastal Prairie - Middle	1988	-41	-41	1984
22 Texoma	1988	-22	-22	1985
23 Forth Worth Prairie	1987	-15	-9	1986
24 Dallas Prairie	1988	-34	-34	1986
25 Blacklands - North	1988	-20	-20	1986
26 Blacklands - South	1988	-52	-52	1985
27 Brazos	1988	-36	-36	1982
28 Houston	1988	-49	-49	1984
29 Northeast	1988	-34	-34	1985
30 Piney Woods - North	1988	-23	-23	1984
31 Piney Woods - South	1988	-52	-52	1984
32 Lower Rio Grnde Valley	1988	-57	-57	1981
33 El Paso	1988	-52	-52	1984
State	1988	-37	-37	1985

Source: Gilliland, Charles E. "Texas Rural Land Prices, 1988," Real Estate Center, Texas A&M University, August 1989.

Acknowledgment

Donna P. Adcock, Extension Graduate Assistant, assisted with research and manuscript development for this publication.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Acts of Congress of May 8, 1914, as amended, and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. Zerle L. Carpenter, Director, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System.

2M–4-92, New CRD